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ESA changes a step backwards, says Bushfire Council. 16/03/2007. ABC News Online

[This is the print version of story <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200703/s1873125.htm>]

Last Update: Friday, March 16, 2007. 8:10am (AEDT)

ESA changes a step backwards, says Bushfire Council

The ACT Bushfire Council says it is worried the restructured Emergency Services Agency (ESA) will not be able to handle another firestorm like the one in 2003.

The council, which advises the ACT Government on bushfire matters, says it is concerned it was not consulted about the changes to replace the ESA's four chief officers with two deputy commissioners.

It is the latest criticism of the restructure after with dozens of volunteer fire brigade captains and officers yesterday resigned in protest.

Bushfire Council chairman Kevin Jeffery says the 12-month trial of the new structure is also waste of time.

Mr Jeffery says the council has written to Emergency Services Minister Simon Corbell, saying the changes are a step backwards.

"You really won't get a chance to test those new arrangements in that time," he said.

"What will probably happen is that within 12 months, it will be bedded down as a fait accompli and they'll continue on with it, and we won't really see the problems until 10 years down the track."

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